



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

MARC ELRICH
COUNCILMEMBER AT-LARGE

This is a good budget for a difficult time. We held extensive budget hearings, took lots of input most of which implored us to do even more. It is one of the joys of serving in Montgomery County where most residents see the valuable role that government plays and would actually like us to do more to address the challenges that many in our community face and who believe that doing so makes this county a better place for everyone.

This budget holds the line on taxes and funds the full operating budget of our school system which many would argue is our most important asset. We maintained our service levels and we continue to do right by our employees who deliver those services. The Executive provided a good base to start from and that always makes this process easier. The council added some school and transit projects to the list of capital improvements, many of which have been waiting a long time. We did it by adjusting another project in the capital budget that most of us felt had a lower priority. We made a commitment to our non-profits ensuring funding would keep pace with the minimum wage increases. I have always felt that was a moral responsibility we had to own – and we did. We expanded funding for Head Start as part of our commitment to expand efforts to broaden access to critical early childhood education programs. This budget as a whole strikes a fair balance between needs and available resources.

As Chair of the Public Safety Committee I want to thank my two colleagues, Sidney Katz and Tom Hucker, for their steadfast support of our committee recommendations. I particularly appreciate the Committee's support for restoring the proposed cuts to our Fire and Rescue Service, which included preserving essential services like the paramedic engines in Hyattstown and Germantown and our aerial truck in Hillandale. We also restored emergency medical transport funds for the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association. We added daytime staffing at the Burtonsville Fire Station and added funds to help the BCC Rescue Squad, which provides outstanding service. These services are an important part of our obligation to protect our community. In the Sheriff's office we added funds to cover the cost of body worn cameras, further demonstrating our commitment to transparency and accountability in law enforcement.

I appreciate the community and the career and volunteer fire fighters for their advocacy and for working so well together this budget cycle. We couldn't fully fund everything in public safety, and there are worthwhile projects that will have to wait

for funding. But we had to strike a balance between protecting core services, and meeting needs within our resources, and I think we struck a good balance.

Thank you to my colleagues and thank you to the many residents in communities all over the county for their advocacy and their willingness to work with us. I am proud to have served as your representative for almost 12 years and to have worked with all of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Elrich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marc Elrich (At-large)